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do not possess—he told me he heard a report that I was about to abandon the church, and that he called as he knew it was a falsehood, and wished to contradict it. I replied that if he could, on good authority, show me anything to controvert the written Word of God, I was satisfied; otherwise I would abandon the Church of Rome. 'On what grounds?' he asked. 'It shuts out of view the second commandment,' I replied, 'takes away the cup from the laity, and promises to make saints on earth, sends them up to heaven, whether God wills or not, and gets me and such foolish wretches as me to adore them, and sets up their images in places of worship, contrary to God's express command—Deut. xvi. 21, 22.' He asked me had I been speaking to any Protestant on the subject? I said, 'No; that I never heard a sermon from a Protestant, nor ever spoke on the subject to a minister or Scripture-reader.' 'Now, as to relative honour,' said he, 'did you not read how Christ pointed to the image on the coin, and said, "Render to Cæsar the honor due to him."?' 'And is relative honour, therefore, to be paid to saints?' said I: 'no, on the contrary—that means, give to the world what belongs to the world, and to God what belongs to him.' He then referred to the age of the church—its miracles and tradition. I told him we had tradition for fairies, and that I would believe the written Word of God before all the men on earth. 'So,' said he, 'you are forsaking your religion on your own authority, without consulting any person.' 'I am,' I replied, 'on the authority of the written Word of God. Is it not said plainly of the Church of Rome in St. John's Apocalypse, xviii. 4—And I heard another voice from Heaven, go out from her, my people, that you may not be partaker of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues? and,' I said, 'Mr. Nagle, just look at your prayers to saints, and calling the Virgin Mary our life, our sweetness, our hope, robbing God of the honour due to him alone. And sure it was only the other day at Thurles that, in obedience to Dr. Cullen, they declared her immaculate conception. So they know more about her now, eighteen centuries after her death, than the Council of Trent 300 years ago, or the holy Fathers of the early church. And, Mr. Nagle, had you not some sort of a doll or wax figure in the chapel on Good Friday last; and were not the ignorant people told that every one who kissed it would have seven years' indulgence? And look at these catechisms out of which I have been taught, and not a trace to be found in them of the second commandment. And why was it left out, let me ask you? And look at this scapular book; I will show you from your own Bible that it is a glaring falsehood—and why do you permit such things? And lastly, why won't you let the people read the Bible for themselves?' 'Is it to have them all like you?' he said. 'Well, but,' said I, 'is it on the Bible that the church is laid, or is it not?' He said it was, 'but, for all that, you are the most presumptuous man I ever knew, to leave our church on your own single authority.' 'Well,' I said, 'I will not go to mass nor church on Sunday next; I am still open to conviction; show me anything that will satisfy my mind, and I will willingly stick to that church I was fond of.' He then went away, and I continued for some time in a woeful state, thinking of the many bright stars, monks and nuns, apparently of the purest life in the church, besides so many Protestant clergymen of rank and education, going to the Church of Rome. Then I prayed fervently to God to teach me the truth, and keep me from error, and going to my Bible I came on these passages:—'Now the spirit manifestly saith, that in the last time some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils, speaking in hypocrisy, and having their conscience seared; forbidding to marry, and to abstain from meats; which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, and by them that have known the truth—1 Tim. iv. 1-5.' Well, thought I, one thing is clear, this can't mean the Protestant Church; for they don't forbid to marry, nor prohibit the use of meats; and thus, at least according to the Apostle, they seem to know the truth. I read also in Gal. i. 8—'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you beside that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema.' This the apostle emphatically repeats in the 9th verse. And where, thought I, can I find with certainty the gospel which the apostle preached, but in the written Word of God? and surely if I hold by that, I can't go wrong.

'Now, I ask my townspeople to remember that I am not young, being now fifty-five years of age—that my family are settled in life—that I never was considered ambitious nor arrogant: what made me, then, expose myself voluntarily to insult and violence? Nothing but the eternal salvation of my soul, for which I am alone accountable. And if the parties who now assail me knew the happiness and peace of mind I now enjoy, it's not pity they would feel for me, but envy.

'They then broke nearly all the glass in the windows of the house I reside in, and it grieved me to see two Roman Catholic clergymen passing by laughing at the wreck. But it is well known that violence is always the argument they use to deter the people from seeing and using the light which God in his mercy bestows upon him in his word. But what pained me most of all was,

to see my aged brother, Lieut. Kennedy, shedding bitter tears and telling me I was going to damn my soul; that the Church of England was raised on Luther, as every Roman Catholic is taught to believe, and as I believed myself for many years, though now, thank God, from reading his Word, I know the difference.

'But I have also been looking a little into the history of the church; and I was very much shaken by the following circumstance:—The priest in John's-lane Chapel made me promise, before he would give me absolution, to have my grandchild again baptized by a priest; and yet he swore on the Gospels of God, at his ordination, that he did "undoubtedly receive and profess all things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent." And in the fourth canon of that very council it is thus decreed:—Whoever shall affirm that baptism, when administered by heretics, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the intention to do what the church does, is not true baptism, let him be accursed.' What will the priest in St. John's-lane Chapel, in the city of Dublin, say to this?

'And then, when I came to understand all the contradictions of God's Word that the Church of Rome teaches and practises, what opinion could I have of the craft and wickedness of trying to keep me and all other Roman Catholics in ignorance that there are such contradictions? Then I plainly saw why no one was encouraged by the priests to read even the Douay Bible, and some were forbidden to read it, and others told that it was too hard for them to understand it, though the mass, and prayers in Latin are not too hard. I thank God, from my very heart, that, after being so long without it, I at last undertook to study it, whereby I discovered how opposed it is to a great deal of what the church teaches; and how the glorious tidings of free and full pardon through Christ my Lord had been concealed from me, and how that, and the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit were put aside by the false doctrines about penances and purgatory. I once thought to serve God like a slave, so much work did I go through, for fear of his anger. Now, seeing his great love to me, and the wonderful salvation he offers to me by the means of so great a sacrifice—that of his own Son once offered on the cross, whereby 'he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' my chief desire is to serve him like a son, willingly, out of humble affection and heartfelt gratitude.

"JOHN KENNEDY."

REPLY TO MR. AYLMER'S LETTER ON READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

(Continued from page 71.)

(7) Mr. Aylmer joins issue with us on the scriptural proof that the priests were to be regarded as "the judges authorized by God to expound his law, and their exposition to be considered binding." He quotes Ezek. xlv. 24, which clearly refers only to temporal or criminal causes (in which the Jewish priests were judges), and not to controversies in religion. He quotes next Mal. ii. 7—"for the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge." Now, in the article he refers to, we have already quoted the next verse (8), in which God says to those very priests, "but you have departed out of the way, and caused many to stumble at the law." Mr. Aylmer takes no notice of this, but still claims verse 7 as binding us to whatever the priests say; so we now refer him to verse 9, in which God goes on to say—"Therefore have I also made you (the priests) contemptible, and base before all people." Now granting, as we do, that the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and that the people should seek it at his mouth, yet when God says that when those priests went astray he himself made them to be despised by the people, is that a proof that God intended that the people should take as binding whatever the priest said, whether right or wrong?

How comes it that they who profess to have an infallible interpreter of Scripture, do always misapply Scripture, and wrest it so strangely, while they who are fallible are thus able to correct them? We shall explain this another time.

Mr. Aylmer also refers to John xv. 27—a text expressly limited to the testimony of those who had been with Christ from the beginning—i.e., his twelve Apostles. How does this apply to priests now?

He quotes also Acts viii. 26. This was the case of a man reading for himself with the Bible in his hands, and confessing that he found it very hard to understand without some one to guide him. A minister of the Gospel (not a "priest," for he was only a deacon) was sent to him, not to take the book away from him, because he could not understand it, but to help and instruct him in reading. Is this most like the practice of the Roman Catholic priests, or of the clergy of the Church of England and Ireland now?

(8) Mr. Aylmer next calls the Scripture "a dead letter," unable to speak for itself. We confess we do not understand this, nor can we perceive what there is to prevent any man who has eyes, and knows how to read, from obtaining, by perusal of the "letter," a knowledge of the "spirit and meaning." On his next point we

think we may come to an agreement. We agree with him that, as in civil affairs, there are not only laws but also judges, whose business it is to explain those laws, so God has provided us not only with a written Word, but also with a distinct order of men, whose business it is to explain that Word. Only we do not believe that every priest is infallible, and we suppose neither does Mr. Aylmer. The rule of faith is the written Word and not the priest's teaching (for the written Word is the rule by which the correctness of the priest's teaching is tested), just as, in civil matters, the rule is the law of the land and not the decision of any judge. The decision of an able judge on a doubtful point is regarded as an authority, but is not absolutely binding on his brethren; and if a judge decide plainly contrary to the law, other judges would regard his ruling without any respect at all.

(9) Mr. Aylmer asks—"If we were to be exercising private judgment, where would be the end of litigation and dispute?" We acknowledge that, when fallible men exercise private judgment, there must be risk of error, and consequently room for dispute; and we might have fancied that God would have made a world into which it should be impossible for error to enter. But we know that he has not done so. We must exercise our private judgment, if on no other question at least on this, whether we will use our private judgment on other questions or not. Mr. Aylmer, in the exercise of his private judgment, has arrived at the conclusion that the Church of Rome is infallible, and that he must submit his judgment to her in all religious matters: but in so judging we are convinced he has not escaped error; and this very discussion makes it clear that he has certainly not escaped litigation and dispute. Why God should have left his creatures liable to error is a difficulty which we shall undertake to explain when Mr. Aylmer has accounted for the existence of sin in the world, and has given a satisfactory explanation why earth is not heaven. At any rate we must not refuse to employ the faculties which God has given us, in the hope of avoiding some inconveniences with which the use of them is attended. To give up private judgment, in the hope of avoiding litigation and dispute, is the same as if a man should cure his corns by cutting off his legs.

(10) Mr. Aylmer next says—"Our Blessed Lord never wrote or commanded his disciples to write anything." This assertion he has unwarily copied from Dr. Milner (End of Controversy, letter 8); but that it is not true, may immediately be seen by referring to Apocalypse or Revelations, chap. 1, and verses 11, 19. But even supposing that we had not been able to show that Jesus Christ had commanded his Apostles to write anything, what then? Will Mr. Aylmer venture to say that the Apostles wrote the Scriptures by accident or out of their own heads? He knows that his Church holds, that the writers of that Sacred Volume were moved by the Holy Ghost. And as he certainly holds the doctrine of the Trinity, he must believe that what they wrote, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was written in obedience to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is really the question on which the whole controversy turns; for if the Apostles wrote the Scriptures according to the promptings of their human wills, then it would be very credible that some of the Christian doctrines might be contained in their writings, and others in the writings of uninspired men. But if we believe that the Holy Spirit directed the formation of the canon of Scripture, then the only account we can give of the reason why the Scriptures were given is, that they were intended to preserve, free from the insecurity of oral tradition, in a permanent form, all the essential doctrines of the Gospel. And it is difficult to believe that this work was left imperfect, and that there are any doctrines which God did not see fit to embody in his word and yet which it is necessary for us to believe. It was to escape this plain inference that Dr. Milner was led to assert that Jesus Christ never commanded his Apostles to write anything; and to insinuate (for he dared not to express it) that the Apostolic writings are a mere fortuitous collection of humanly suggested compositions.

(11) Mr. Aylmer quotes Heb. i. 2—"God hath spoken (not written) to us by his Son." The verse before is, "God who . . . spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets." Did not this apply to the writing of the prophets as well as their spoken words? So St. Peter (1 Ep. iii. 16) says of Paul's epistles, "speaking in them of these things." Would Mr. A. infer from that that St. Paul delivered his epistles by word of mouth, and did not write them?

(12) Mr. Aylmer says, Christ "did not say, He that readeth or heareth the Scriptures," &c. We refer to Apocalypse, chap. i. v. 3, where Christ did say of that book, confessedly the most difficult in the Bible, "Blessed is he that readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy."

(13) Mr. Aylmer's quotation from St. Jerome, having no reference given, is not admissible.

(14) We come now to the texts, 2 Thes. ii. 15, 2 Thes. iii. 6, Rom. vi. 17, 2 Tim. i. 13. It is necessary to remark, that the word tradition is ambiguous. It is used both to express "doctrina tradita" and also

the "modus tradendi." It is in the former sense that the word occurs in St. Paul's writings; it is in the latter sense alone that it becomes a subject of controversy. We all agree that we are bound to believe the "doctrine delivered" by St. Paul to his converts, but we differ on this question, how this doctrine has been handed down to us. The texts quoted by Mr. Aylmer afford no proof that there were any doctrines delivered by St. Paul to the churches, which are not now to be found in the written Word of God. Will Mr. Aylmer tell us any one thing which St. Paul delivered to those Churches, which the Church of England and Ireland does not hold now? If he can, we hope that he will; if he cannot, how can he expect us to believe more than we do?

(15) Mr. Aylmer's observations on the case of persons who could not read, have been answered in our prefatory remarks. Such persons must, no doubt, to a certain extent, depend on the guidance of their better educated brethren; but still they are not altogether without some means of forming a judgment for themselves. The other day the newspapers asserted that several English brewers were in the habit of putting a certain poisonous ingredient into their beer. What was a common man to do? How was he to know whether the beer he was offered was poisonous or not? Why, he might soon learn that the accused brewers had challenged full investigation, and had submitted their beer to be tested by the most eminent chemists, who had pronounced it to be free from any noxious ingredient. And he would consider this quite satisfactory, although quite ignorant of chemistry and unable to test the beer for himself. But now suppose any brewer had refused to submit to investigation, and had declared his beer to be so superlatively good that he could not permit any chemist to test it, then would not one have a very strong suspicion that there was some ingredient not exactly what it should be! And so, in like manner, we think that an unlearned man of common shrewdness will see that it is wiser to follow the guiding of the Church which invites all who are able to compare its teaching with God's Word rather than that of the Church which will not permit its doctrines to be examined into at all.

(16) Mr. Aylmer assures us that he does not depreciate the Scriptures, but holds his Bible in the highest estimation; we believe that this is sincerely his intention. But we cannot forget that all those who have done most to depreciate the Scriptures, have made the same protestations, many of them with, perhaps, as much sincerity; Mr. Aylmer may be depreciating it without intending it. He goes on to state his object, "to give evident proof that tradition and the instruction of pastors are as sufficient to make good Christians now as in the first ages of Christianity." He had already said that these means were effectual (which we admit, there being then teachers inspired by the Holy Ghost) before the Bible was written. If tradition and teaching are as sufficient now (when there are no inspired teachers, and tradition has been so corrupted), the Bible is as unnecessary now as before it was written, and might never have been written at all. If this will not teach men to disregard it, we know not what would.

Is Mr. Aylmer satisfied with the present extent of Scripture reading and Scriptural education among the Roman Catholics of Ireland? If he be not, can he expect to promote its progress by such arguments as these? But if he be satisfied with it, can he suppose that St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, or the other Fathers, would have been satisfied with it? We are sure they would not.

(17) We come next to Mr. Aylmer's reference to St. Augustine. We have before had occasion to observe that it is quite impossible to reason satisfactorily on the meaning of an ancient author, if merely given a single passage from his works, without an opportunity of comparing it with the context. We have, therefore, made it a rule constantly to protest against second hand quotations, and against quotations without references. In this instance Mr. Aylmer has put two distinct passages of St. Augustine together, and has given a reference which only applies to the latter. We might, therefore, be excused from saying anything as to the former part. But we must remark that the limiting clause, "unless he has the charge of teaching others," tells far more in our favour than the rest of the passage tells against us. For we have already admitted the possibility of a man, if rightly instructed, attaining a knowledge of saving truth without a personal study of the Scriptures; but we have said the test, whether the instruction be right, must be a comparison of that instruction with the written Word. Now, if the Romish theory be true, a priest may dispense with a personal study of the Scriptures just as well as a layman. "For a priest is bound to follow the teachings of the church, and, if he teach her 'traditions,' he will guide himself and his people right, even though he have never opened the Bible. And, on the other hand, a priest, who should exercise his private judgment on the doctrines of the church, and should test their truth by comparing them with the written

Word, would be, no less than a layman, in danger of going astray." But, it is plain, from the passage quoted by Mr. Aylmer, that St. Augustine, when stating, as low as possible, the obligations to a personal study of the Scriptures, never dreamed that a priest could be excused from it. He evidently felt, that one who had the charge of teaching others, could only keep his teaching right, by constantly comparing it with God's written Word. We hope, in an early number, to show, by other quotations from St. Augustine, that we are right in this statement of his views respecting the Scriptures.*

In the second passage quoted, St. Augustine says, that we believe the Gospel moved by the authority of the church. And this statement is true, if rightly understood. But it must be observed, as Dr. Milner points out (see End of Controversy, letter xiii.), that when we say we receive the Scripture on the authority of the church, we mean the church considered as a credible, not as an infallible witness; otherwise, he acknowledges we should fall into a vicious circle in attempting to prove the authority of Scripture by the infallibility of the church, and the infallibility of the church by the authority of Scripture. St. Augustine himself elsewhere shows that the evidence on which he believes the genuineness of the Scriptures is the same, in kind, as that on which the genuineness of other books is proved.—See Contra Faust. xxii, 21, "Si quartis a nobis, nos unde sciamus Apostolorum esse istas literas, breviter respondemus, inde nos scire, unde et vos scitis illas literas esse Manichei." And that the testimony of the church was only one of the arguments on which St. Augustine received the Scripture, the reader will find, by consulting his Confessions vi. 5. One of his arguments will scarcely be adopted by those who think with Mr. Aylmer—*Eoque mihi illa venerabilior et sacrosancta fide dignior appareret auctoritas, quo et omnibus ad legendum esset in promptu.*

Mr. Aylmer tells us, that he approves of the reading of the Scriptures, if done with unreserved deference and docility to the decisions of the church. He will allow men to look at the dial, provided they firmly make up their minds to maintain, at any rate, that the clock is right. We are sure Mr. Aylmer is right in approving of Scripture reading, but we doubt his being consistent. For our part, we confess, that if we believed the Roman Catholic theory, we should think that the less the Scriptures were read the better. If we must maintain the clock to be right, why perplex ourselves by looking at the dial, more especially if the majority of those who do look at it arrive at the conclusion that the clock is wrong? (See our article—One Guide or Two?—p. 73.)

(18) Mr. Aylmer makes the decrees of general councils the interpreter of Scripture; he mentions this alone, and, of course, he believes in no other; we ask him to consider—

1st. Dr. Cullen and the Pope will pronounce this rank heresy, as bad as any Protestant can be guilty of. "St. Peter's successor" is their interpreter of Scripture, though not Mr. Aylmer's; and they will never tolerate his denial of their interpreter.

2nd. Mr. Aylmer, in No. viii., appears to think an ever-living interpreter necessary; yet, when we look at his interpreter, we find there has not been any in the Catholic Church for three hundred years. For so long it is since a general council of the Roman Church was held; and it may be three hundred years more before they venture to hold another.

3rd. Who is to "interpret" the council of Trent? Does Mr. Aylmer know all that has been done about that by the Popes? and what a puzzle it has proved, at least as great as interpreting the Scripture!

4th. What are the general councils? Can Mr. Aylmer give us a certain and unquestionable list of them? If he can, we entreat him to do so. If he can not, how are we to find this rule?

(19) Mr. Aylmer says, there never was a heresy that did not profess to be founded on Scripture. We reply, that there have been very many, founded on the rejection of one or several of the books of Scripture.

(20 & 21) In reply to what Mr. Aylmer says of the differing opinions of some who call themselves Protestants, we have to say—1st, that (with the exception of Socinians and some others, whom we do not look upon as Christians, though they call themselves Protestants) we know of no difference among any Protestant bodies about articles of faith, equal to that between Mr. Aylmer himself, on one side, and his Primate and his Pope on the other, about the interpreter of Scripture.

* Since the above was written, we have been able to put our hands on the passage of St. Augustine (De Doctrina Christiana, lib. i, c. 39) from which we doubt not Mr. Aylmer's citation is taken. An examination of it confirms us in our conviction of the absolute necessity of verifying every quotation, before arguing on it. The words, "and guided by the decisions of his pastors," do not occur in the passage we have referred to. St. Augustine does not seem to be speaking of the case of an illiterate man depending on the decisions of his pastors, but of the case of a man, originally built up in faith, hope, and charity by the Scriptures, and yet able to retain these graces without the continued use of the Bible. He alludes, specially, to the case of solitary dwelling without books in the desert. And it cannot be inferred from this passage, that St. Augustine supposed that a Christian living in society (a father of a family, for example), who might be called on to instruct others, could dispense with the use of the written Word.

They will tell him that their claim, which he evidently rejects, is an article of faith.

2nd. That we are not answerable for the opinions of those who separate from us; but is he equally unconcerned in the opinions of the head of his own church, whom he professes to consider the Vicar of Christ on earth?

(22) Mr. Aylmer is glad that we repudiate the notion that "private judgment" is the same as "unaided, uninstructed judgment." We do repudiate it. We believe that God has given us sufficient means of understanding the Scripture; and we dare not reject those means. We believe that an undying church, instituted by Christ himself, and a teaching ministry, derived and continued from his institution, are important means. And we, in our turn, will be glad (and we yet trust that time may come) when Mr. Aylmer will repudiate the notion that the "private judgment" which he already, to some extent, does exercise, is absolutely subjugated by God to the *ipse dixit* of priests who have caused many to stumble.

We consider the text he has quoted here—2 Peter i. 20—inapplicable, for it treats of how prophecy was "made" [Douay translation; "fit," Latin version] and the word "private," as both the Greek and Latin show, is not opposed to "public," or the authority of the Church, but refers to the man himself who delivered the prophecy, as distinguished from the Holy Ghost who spoke in him.

Mr. Aylmer next argues, if we understand him rightly, that a man cannot exercise his private judgment if the results of his judgment coincide with that of other people. This seems to have been hastily written, and not to require an answer. It is surely unnecessary to point out that several men, reasoning rightly, may, by an exercise of their private judgment, arrive independently at a common conclusion.

(23) Neither do we think that Mr. Aylmer will, on reflection, require us to give any answer to the collection he has made of passages from the Scriptures in which the words reason and authority occur: not one of which is relevant to any point in dispute between the Churches of England and of Rome. We approve of Scriptural arguments; but we cannot consider that it is a proper mode of arguing to hunt up from a concordance texts in which certain words occur, without examining the context, and the whole bearing of the passage.

(24, 25, 26) The conclusion of Mr. Aylmer's letter is principally taken up with an enumeration of sundry points, which he challenges us to prove from the Holy Scriptures. In the topics which he has put together he has confused questions which it is necessary to keep distinct. Bellarmine divides traditions into Divine, or Apostolical, and Ecclesiastical. The first alone are in question, when the controversy is concerning the rule of faith; and the Church of England doctrine concerning them is stated in her sixth article. The latter relate to the rites and ceremonies of the church; and the Church of England doctrine concerning them is stated in her thirty-fourth article, "On the Traditions of the Church." Her statement in the sixth article is, that all Divine and Apostolical traditions are contained in the Bible, and that nothing is to be received as an article of faith, the belief in which is necessary to salvation, unless it be contained in Holy Scripture. Her statement in the thirty-fourth article is, that every national church has authority to ordain, change, and abolish rites or ceremonies, provided that all things be done unto edifying, and that individual members of such a church must not break ceremonies thus approved by common authority. When, therefore, Mr. Aylmer (26) asks for a Scripture proof of the Church of England table of fasts and feasts, he plainly confounds Apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions. That St. Peter's day is to be kept holy, is not an article of faith, the belief in which is necessary to salvation; and, therefore, the Church of England is not bound in consistency to maintain that this can be proved from the Scriptures: it is but a matter of church discipline, which the church might abrogate if she pleased.

The observance of the Lord's Day rests, also, on the same authority, as far as the Scriptures are silent on the subject. It can, however, easily be shown from Scripture that, in weekly commemorating the resurrection of our Lord, the Church has not acted arbitrarily, but has followed the example of the Apostles. With regard to the abolition of the Jewish Sabbath, the Scriptures are not silent: they not only speak of the abrogation of all the Mosaic law, but they especially declare that this particular part of it is not binding on Gentile Christians. See Colossians ii. 16.

It is not by tradition, but by our natural reason, that we know that the words of our Lord—"Swear not at all"—are directed against vain and rash swearing, and not against those solemn appeals to God, on lawful occasions, the use of which is commanded in the Old Testament (Deut. vi. 13); just as it is not by tradition, but by natural reason, that we know that the words used by our Lord, on the same occasion—"Resist not evil"—were not intended (as the Quakers suppose) to forbid the use of lawful self-defence.

(24) Mr. Aylmer makes a strange mistake when he

* This reference was omitted in our last number. It was St. Aug. Contra Epist. Fundamenti, c. 5.

speaks of our law of divorce, which allows of the "marrying her that is put away." The fact is, our law of divorce does not allow the separated parties to marry. And it is by no means our business to discuss the merits of acts of parliament which have occasionally been passed in particular cases giving divorces of a nature which the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Church of England refuse.

We do not reject "transubstantiation," because the word is not found in the Scriptures. If Mr. Aylmer can prove us the doctrine from Scripture, we shall not quarrel about the word. We adopt the words "Trinity" and "consubstantial," because they express distinctly and concisely the Scriptural doctrines as opposed to the Arian corruptions; but we do not say that the use of these words is essential to salvation, for we know that, in the first two centuries, there were thousands of saints who, indeed, held the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, but who died before these words, "Trinity" and "consubstantial," were introduced.

(25) Mr. Aylmer denies that all the thirty-nine articles can be directly proved from Scripture. We have again to remind him that it is only *articles of faith*, the belief of which is necessary to salvation, which we assert to be exclusively contained in Holy Scripture. All the thirty-nine articles do not relate to such articles of faith; but those which do, we receive because we believe them capable of Scriptural proof.

The only point in Mr. Aylmer's letter which it now remains for us to notice, is the fact that the Prayer Book version of the 14th Psalm (as well as the Roman Catholic versions) contains three or four verses more than are found in the common authorized version. It should be mentioned, however, that these verses are found elsewhere in the Bible. It is plain that the revisers of the Church of England Liturgy did not consider this transposition a very important variation, or they would not have retained in the Prayer Book the use of the more ancient translation of the Psalms. Roman Catholic divines, however, have fastened on this trifling disagreement with earnestness almost ludicrous; and while not scrupling to allow the Scriptures to remain unknown to the majority of their laity, speak as if they believed that the awful curses denounced against any who should presume to add to the Word of God, were incurred by a copyist who should misplace a verse or two in his transcription.

With regard to these verses the state of the case is this:—The verses in question are not now found, we believe, in any copy of the Hebrew. They are found in most copies of the Septuagint Greek translation. Accordingly they do not appear in the Bible version, which was made directly from the Hebrew; they do appear in the Prayer-book version, which (like modern Roman Catholic versions) is a translation of a translation. Now, it is a curious critical question, whether it be more likely that these words have dropped out of all copies of the Hebrew, or that they have been inserted into some copies of the Septuagint. But it is not an important religious question, because the words are confessedly inspired, being used by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. iii. Even, then, if we suppose that the Prayer-book version errs, in company with those of the Church of Rome, we must admit that the error is a very unimportant one, and that, if the Church of Rome had been guilty of none more serious, we should not have been justified in leaving her communion.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Finding it impossible, from its great length, to insert the letter of the Rev. R. A. Wilson, we have forwarded it to the Rev. W. Carson, to whom it was addressed.

We have to apologize also to several valued correspondents for postponing communications addressed to ourselves, but which we hope to print in our next number.

In reply to our Kingstown correspondent, we beg to say that we have applied to the Rev. Dr. Murray of Maynooth, for permission to reprint his reply to the Archbishop of Dublin's essay on Infallibility; should we obtain his leave, we purpose commencing the subject in our next number.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st.

No anonymous letter can be attended to. Whatever is sent for insertion must be authenticated by the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee for his good faith.

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The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, JULY, 1852.

THE USE OF "THE FATHERS" IN PROVING THE NOVELTY OF ERRORS.

IN the course of our remarks on the use of the Fathers, in our last number, we stated our opinion, that the Fathers were "above all value in enabling us to convict of novelty the errors which have arisen in the church since their times," of which we undertook to give an example in our next. We now proceed to fulfil our promise; and take as our instance the doctrine of praying to saints and angels.

It is admitted by all learned Roman Catholic conversationalists, that saints and angels were not prayed to nor invoked under the Old Testament dispensation. It is also generally admitted by them, that praying to saints and angels is not taught in the New Testament. We give one instance of the latter admission, from Salmeron, a very learned Jesuit—"The Scriptures which were made and published in the primitive church, ought to found (or to lay the foundation of) and to explain Christ, who by the *tacit* (or *silent*, which *admits* that the Spirit did *not say it*) suggestion of the Spirit, did bring the saints with him; and it *would have been a hard matter* to command this to the Jews; and to the Gentiles, an *occasion would be given thereby* (that is, by teaching the worship of saints and angels in the New Testament) to think that *many gods* were put upon them, instead of the multitude of gods whom they had forsaken."—Salmeron, in 1 Tim., cap. 2, disput. 8.

We think the learned Jesuit has, in the above passage, very fairly admitted and accounted for the fact, that this doctrine was not taught in the New Testament; and we fully agree with him, that it would, if contained in the Sacred Writings, have been a great stumbling-block to the Jews, who were taught to worship God only, and also that the Gentiles would have taken it as a plain approbation of their former practice of worshipping dead men. But supposing the doctrine itself to be a true doctrine of the Gospel (and such Salmeron supposes it to be), we are at a loss to know how the Apostles could thus agree to hide it, for fear of creating offences, and teaching actual idolatry. This does not seem to have been the practice of the Apostles. They did not hide the doctrines of the Gospel, for fear men should take offence at them. Nor did they fear that the true Gospel of Christ should make men idolaters. Nor do we see how this notion of their concealing such doctrines, upon such reasons, can be reconciled with St. Paul's declaration to the Ephesians (who had been heathens and idolaters)—"I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house" (Acts, ch. 20, v. 20, Douay Bible); and v. 27—"I have not spared to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God." Now, if St. Paul preached this doctrine of praying to saints and angels to these heathen idolaters, "from house to house," it would have produced all the evils of idolatry, which Salmeron admits would have followed from teaching it in the New Testament Scriptures; and if St. Paul did *not* teach it to them, it is clear he did *not* think that it was profitable for them, or that it was any part of "the counsel of God."

But our present business with it is this:—It is agreed on both sides, that this doctrine is *not* taught in either the Old or the New Testament, and, therefore, that it is not taught in the Bible at all. Therefore, if it *was* part of the Apostles' doctrine, it has come down to us by tradition

alone. Here, then, comes in "the use of the Fathers;" for we suppose it will be admitted, that if the Fathers, for FOUR HUNDRED YEARS after Christ, have never mentioned this doctrine, except to condemn and to censure it, and to show that it was not *then* any part of the faith of the church—it will be admitted that this doctrine has *not* come down *through them* from the Apostles, but that it must be an invention of later times.

We propose, therefore, to illustrate this "use of the Fathers" of the first four centuries after Christ, by showing what they have said of this doctrine.

Our first witness is St. Ignatius, the martyr. He was known in the early church by another name, "Theophorus." This was a Greek word, signifying—"carried by Christ." Some have related, that he took this name from having been one of the children whom Christ took up in his arms and laid his hands upon and blessed; we know not whether this is true, but *it is possible*, for he was made bishop of the important See of Antioch by the Apostles, about the year 70 (40 years after the death of Christ), and he suffered death for the confession of Christ, about the year 110. In his epistle to the Philadelphians, written shortly before his death, we find these words—"Ye virgins, have *Christ alone before your eyes*, and his Father, *in your prayers*, being enlightened by the Spirit."*

Now, this is not the doctrine which is taught to "virgins" in the Roman Church of this day; they are taught to keep the Blessed Virgin and "St. Joseph," and many others, *before their eyes in their prayers*.

St. Polycarp, a disciple of St. John, and Bishop of Smyrna, also suffered martyrdom about the year 147. In the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius, we have an epistle written by the Church of Smyrna, giving an account of his death. They relate that the Jews insisted that his dead body should not be given up to the Christians, for fear "they should begin to worship this man." On which the epistle observes—"Being ignorant that it is not possible that we should ever forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of all who shall be saved of the whole world, OR THAT WE SHOULD WORSHIP ANY OTHER. For him indeed we worship, as being the Son of God; but the martyrs we deservedly love, as the disciples and followers of our Lord."—Euseb. Ed. Valesii, Mogunt. 1672. Book iv., ch. 15.

The great Athanasius, writing against the Arians (Oratio III.) says—"No man would pray to receive anything from the Father, *and the angels, or any other creatures*, neither would any man say, 'God and the angels give me this.'" If St. Athanasius had lived in these days, he might have learned differently. "God and the Blessed Virgin preserve me," or "God and the angels protect me," is not now thought amiss; yet Athanasius says that no Christian in his day would have said such a thing.

And even those Fathers of whose errors we are warned, are useful in this inquiry. For instance, Origen, whom (on the authority of St. Vincent) we have held up as a warning, agrees in condemning this doctrine—"All prayers and

* We do not undertake to affirm that these words were written by Ignatius. The words are in the old copies of his letters, received as true for centuries; but they are not in the new editions of that letter, since the discovery of the Alexandrian Codex. We would not quote the words at all, but for this reason: if the words were *not* written by Ignatius, they were put into his works in later times by some one else. Now, whenever this was done, it was clearly not thought to be contrary to the doctrine of the church at that time. If a denial of the Trinity had been put into Ignatius's writings, every one would have said—"Ignatius could not have written that;" but the church did *not* say it of the words in question. So, in fact, this makes the proof stronger; for it shows that these words were not considered contrary to church doctrine when inserted in later times, if it were so.